

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CPR-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01
OMB-01 DHA-05 /116 W

-----003272 260116Z /64

R 251459Z OCT 77

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6557

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TORONTO

AMCONSUL BELIZE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 4039

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, SHUM, CR, BH, GT, XL, RQ, US

SUBJECT: WORKING LUNCH FOR COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT

REF: PORT OF SPAIN 2310

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S LUNCH IN COSTA RICAN
PRESIDENT ODUBER'S HONOR, ATTENDED BY USG OFFICIALS,
CONGRESSMAN RYAN, MEDIA, BUSINESS AND FOUNDATION REPRESENT-
ATIVES, ODUBER GAVE A BRIEFING ON THE CARIBBEAN AND RESPONDED
TO QUESTIONS. HE SAID THAT BELIZE IS THE NUMBER ONE PROBLEM
IN THE CARIBBEAN. COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION ARE THE
ONLY WAY OUT FOR THE CARIBBEAN (TO BE READ CARIBBEAN BASIN).
MEXICAN PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO IS TRYING TO ARRANGE AN EXP-
ANDED MEETING OF THE "BOGOTA FIVE" NEXT YEAR. THE
CARIBBEAN CANNOT DO WITHOUT US CAPITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND
MARKETS. ODUBER SEES INDEPENDENCE OR STATEHOOD AS THE
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CHOICE FOR PUERTO RICO AND RECOMMENDS THAT THE US BE
READY FOR INDEPENDENCE, WHICH THE MAJORITY OF THE
CARIBBEAN NATIONS FAVOR. THE NEW DEMOCRATIC WINDS FROM
WASHINGTON HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS
PROGRESS IN LATIN AMERICA.
END SUMMARY.

1. INTRODUCTION:

ON OCTOBER 21, AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAD WORKING LUNCH FOR COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT ODUBER. OFFICIAL GUESTS INCLUDED: FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO, PERMREP SALAZAR, DEPUTY PERMREP ORTEGA, ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES SHELTON AND FRANK, AMBASSADOR WELLS, CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN (D CALIFORNIA), AND MISOFFS. OTHER GUESTS WERE FROM CITIBANK, INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS, THE CARNEGI ENDOWMENT, THE NEW YORK TIMES, ABC, THE COUNCIL FOR THE AMERICAS, AND PAN AMERICAN. ODUBER GAVE BRIEFING ON THE CARIBBEAN (AND ABBREVIATED VERSION OF THAT REPORTED IN REFTEL) AND RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS.

2. BELIZE:

DURING TABLE CONVERSATION PRIOR TO HIS BRIEFING, ODUBER NOTED HIS CONCERN ABOUT BELIZE, THE NUMBER ONE PROBLEM IN THE CARIBBEAN. HE TOLD THE PRESIDENT OF GUATEMALA RECENTLY THAT WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO ENHANCE PROSPECTS FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT AND NOT BOG DOWN IN THE QUESTION OF A TERRITORIAL CESSION. GUATEMALAN ACCESS TO THE GULF MIGHT BE ASSURED BY MEANS OF A NARROW CORRIDOR (LIKE THAT BEING CONSIDERED FOR BOLIVIA) WITH A "SPECIAL" TERRITORIAL STATUS. REGRETTING THE IMPRESSION OF US SUPPORT FOR GUATEMALA, HE SAID THAT GUATEMALA IS BEGINNING TO PERCEIVE IT IS ISOLATED. HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE USG
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POSITION, TODMAN NOTED THAT THE US HAS TOLD THE GUATEMALANS THAT THE ISSUE MUST BE RESOLVED OR GUATEMALA WILL BE ALONE IN 1978. THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE FOR BELIZE WITHOUT HAVING A WAR START AT THE SAME TIME.

3. THE CARIBBEAN: ODUBER LAMENTED THE "MENTAL BLOCK" WHICH INHIBITS THE US FROM SEEING THE CARIBBEAN AREA AS A WHOLE. US SECURITY WILL BE THREATENED IF THERE IS NO PROGRESS TOWARD COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION IN THE REGION AND AN IMPROVEMENT OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING. COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION ARE "THE ONLY WAY OUT FOR THE CARIBBEAN: " ODUBER MADE CLEAR THAT HE IS TALKING ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN BASIN (INCLUDING 22 COUNTRIES). SIGNS OF PROGRESS TOWARDS GREATER COOPERATION INCLUDE NAMCUR, LOS MATTERS AND MEXICAN PARTICIPATION IN CARIBBEAN VENTURES (NOW THAT THEY HAVE "LOST THEIR FEAR OF THE US")

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C O N F I E E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 4039

4. HE SAID THAT THE PROBLEM OF CUBA CAN BE SOLVED
"WITH PATIENCE", EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF PROVIDING
ASSISTANCE TO HAITI AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN JAMAICAN
PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY.
RECENT HIGH-LEVEL US VISITS HAVE BEEN VERY IMPORTANT
AND YOUNG HAS GAINED THE "FRIENDSHIP AND TRUST" OF
CARIBBEAN LEADERS. ODUBER IS PUTTING TOGETHER A
PAPER, AT PRESIDENT CARTER'S REQUEST, TO SEEK WAYS
TO INVOLVE CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU MORE ACTIVELY
IN THE REGION. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION CONCERNING
POSSIBLE FURTHER MEETINGS OF THE BOGOTA FIVE, ODUBER
SAID THAT MEXICAN PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO IS TRYING TO
ARRANGE AN EXPANDED MEETING NEXT YEAR.

5. THE WAY TO FOSTER INTEGRATION IS TO BUILD ON THE
INSTITUTIONS WHICH NOW EXIST. THERE IS NO NEED FOR
EXAMPLE, TO ABANDON MEMBERSHIP IN ONE GROUP (CARICOM,
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THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET OR THE ANDEAN PACT)
TO BECOME A MEMBER OF ANOTHER. ODUBER CONTINUED THAT
THE CARIBBEAN IS RICH IN STRATEGIC AND HUMAN RESOURCES
AND LEANS NATURALLY TOWARDS US TECHNOLOGY AND FINANCIAL

INSTITUTIONS. CITING DISCUSSIONS FOR A \$2 BILLION ALUMINA PROJECT FOR COSTA RICA, ODUBER SAID THAT THE REGION CAN'T DO WITHOUT US CAPITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND MARKETS.

6. MEXICAN LABOR PROBLEMS: ODUBER SAID HE IS VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE "MEXICAN LABOR PROBLEM" BUT THAT CARIBBEAN INTEGRATION COULD SOLVE IT. WITH INTEGRATION, LABOR AND POPULATION MOVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE REGION WOULD BECOME "LESS IMPORTANT." 70,000 NICARAGUANS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE PRESENTLY EMPLOYED IN COSTA RICA. (WE ASSUME THAT ODUBER MEANT THAT UNIMPEDED POPULATION MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT A PROSPEROUS, LABOR-HUNGARY CARIBBEAN WOULD EASE MEXICAN UNEMPLOYMENT AND REDUCE THE FLOW OF UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS TO THE US.)

7. PUERTO RICO: IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM CONGRESSMAN RYAN, ODUBER SAID THAT, WHILE THE COMMON-WEALTH IDEA WAS BRILLIANT IN ITS DAY, HE NOW SEES THE CHOICE FOR PUERTO RICO AS BETWEEN STATEHOOD AND INDEPENDENCE. HE RECOMMENDS GIVING INCREASING AUTONOMY TO PUERTO RICO AND "BEING READY" FOR PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE. THE MAJORITY OF THE CARIBBEAN NATIONS FAVOR INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO. NOTING THAT HE HAS ASKED FOR PUERTO RICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF US CARIBBEAN POLICY, TODMAN SAID THAT THERE IS NO SENTIMENT IN PUERTO RICO FOR BREAKING THE TIES IT HAS WITH THE US. PUERTO RICO WON'T CHOOSE INDEPENDENCE UNLESS PUSHED INTO IT BY THE US (BY

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REJECTING A BID FOR STATEHOOD, FOR EXAMPLE).

8. HUMAN RIGHTS: ODUBER STATED THAT CHANGES IN THE US HAD BEEN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR LATIN AMERICA THAN FOR THE US. FOLLOWING EIGHT "DIFFICULT" YEARS IN WHICH THE MILITARY IN LA UTILIZED THE CUBAN THREAT TO JUSTIFY TAKING POWER, THE SITUATION CHANGED GREATLY WITH THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER, WHO ENJOYED POLITICAL SUPPORT AND WHO TOOK A FIRM STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS. COSTA RICA FELT STRENGTHENED BY THE US ELECTION, AND READY TO HELP THE US TO FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY. THE NEW DEMOCRATIC WINDS BLOWING FROM WASHINGTON WERE ENOUGH TO BRING ABOUT IMPORTANT PROGRESS IN LATIN AMERICA, IN PARTICULAR, IN PERU, ECUADOR, ARGENTINA, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND HAITI. US SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IS THE KIND OF "INTERVENTION" WHICH ODUBER APPROVES OF. ONE OTHER "TICKLISH" AREA WHERE FURTHER US HELP WOULD BE DESIRABLE IS FOR THE US MILITARY TO CONVINCE THEIR LA COUNTERPARTS THAT THEIR PLACE IS IN THE BARRACKS AND

NOT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACES OF LATIN AMERICA. RATIFICATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES IS "CRUCIAL" AND WILL LEAD TO A DEMOCRATIZATION OF PANAM WITHIN A FEW WEEKS.

9. AMBASSADOR YOUNG THANKED ODUBER FOR SHARING HIS VIEWS AND ASSURED HIM THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE TO PROMOTE HIS IDEAS.

10. COMMENT: ODUBER WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH YOUNG'S HOSPITALITY AND VERY CORDIAL AND COMPLIMENTARY REMAKRS ABOUT HIM AND COSTA RICA. HE ALSO CLEARLY APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE HIS CASE FOR CARIBBEAN BASIN INTEGRATION TO AN INFLUENTIAL AUDIENCE. END COMMENT.

YOUNG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Event:
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Subject: WORKING LUNCH FOR COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT
TAGS: PORG, SHUM, CR, BH, GT, XL, RQ, US, UNGA, (ODUBER QUIROS, DANIEL)
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